

SOCIAL ACTION

PACIFIC SCHOOL

OF RELIGION



CHRISTIAN CONCERN FOR PUBLIC SCHOOLS

A MAGAZINE OF CHRISTIAN CONCERN

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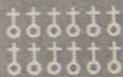
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SOCIAL ACTION

February 1958

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editorial



CHRISTIANS ARE CONCERNED about the welfare of the children of all people. Except for the home, no institution has greater influence upon America's children than the public schools. Therefore, Christians are deeply concerned about the welfare of the public schools. This issue of **SOCIAL ACTION** explores this concern.

Dr. R. L. Hunt opens the discussion by setting forth the reasons why Christians must be concerned about the schools and outlines some of the major dilemmas facing them. Dr. F. Ernest Johnson states clearly the proper relation between religious forces and the public schools and lists issues calling for continued thought and discussion. An article entitled "How Shall We Pay for Public School Education?" throws light upon the controversial subject of ways and means of financing our schools. And Mr. C. W. Cross evaluates the results of calling upon mature, married women to meet the shortage of teachers.

Churches considering their responsibilities for the public schools will find helpful resources in these departments: the arts, program planning, and worship.

Although this issue does not discuss the increased awareness of our need for scientific education, we welcome the statement of the General Assembly of the National Council of Churches which says:

We see a need for much more emphasis on education, including scientific, but we hold that there should also be increasing concern with the social sciences and the humanities for the education of the whole man to deal with the whole society.

A brief article calls our attention to world affairs. Dr. Richard M. Fagley evaluates the Twelfth Session of the General Assembly of the United Nations.

By Rolfe Lanier Hunt, Executive Director, Department of Religious and Public Education, National Council of Churches of Christ in America.

Christian concern for the public schools

Who more than a Christian has reason to respond to the need of a child?

Jesus set a child in the midst. If the welfare of the child is central, when he enters the public school he will find a seat in a good classroom and a well prepared teacher.

Jesus said, "inasmuch as ye have done it unto the least of these my brethren," you have done it unto God. Christians serving children serve God.

The Christian who loves his neighbor as himself will seek for the child of his neighbor the good things he seeks for his own child. The Golden Rule by which we do unto others as we would have them do unto us would lead us to put ourselves in the place of the child, and to provide for him the opportunities we might seek for ourselves.

In the spirit of Jesus who came that people might have life and life more abundant, Christians will share in making possible the development of the talents of every individual.

Public schools fulfill religious purposes

If there were no public schools, Christian people would have to duplicate some of the things now done by them. Children have to learn to read, so that each one will be able to read the Bible and know for himself the word of God and what is required of him. The public schools plan for all the children of all the people, and teach the skill of literacy better than it can be taught in segregated groups.

The Christian is responsible to the state and to society for social, economic, and political competence. Children learn the

skills of citizenship more efficiently in a school for all the children of all the people than they could in schools segregated by sectarian religious affiliation.

The Christian calling to make rich the life of every individual, to help him become the finest person it is possible for him to become, requires the development of varied talents; this task is done most effectively in the common school.

Our understanding of the nature of finite man, capable of only limited insights into the infinite we call God, leads us to think that our children will secure a better education where they have the opportunity to exchange insights with all children than they would have in an isolated group. The prayer of Jesus, which sent his disciples into the world instead of pulling them away from it, helps Christians see their opportunities to serve as leaven among the people and institutions which serve them.

TO EDUCATE THE CHILDREN NOW ENTERING SCHOOL, AMERICA NEEDS

TO ADD:



(two chairs for every three)



(two teachers for every three)



(three dollars for every three)



Needed: more education for more children

Granted that Christians and others are committed to the values of the public schools, what then? Good public schools can fulfill religious purposes better than can poor public schools.

Parents who live with their children all the time find it hard to see their growth, while a cousin who drops in after a year is impressed by their development. Let us look with similar perspective at the schools.

My son who graduated from high school recently was one of 2,400,000 babies born in the year of his birth. Over 4,000,000 babies were born in the year of his graduation. When that son started to school, a first grade classroom needed twenty-four chairs; in the year of his graduation it needed forty chairs to keep pace with the rise from 2,400,000 to 4,000,000 children. To every three chairs, two chairs must be added. This is a two-thirds increase in one student generation.

To buy a lot, build and equip a school costs \$1,000 per student at the present prices for fireproof construction in the United States. Think of that the next time you see a baby buggy rolling down the street! The United States needs to add places for 1,600,000 more children in the first grade this year. It will need the same number next year for the second grade and the same number the next year for the third grade and so on through the school. We will also need more teachers. Each year for each grade add two more teachers for each three teachers.

New classrooms and new teachers mean that we need to increase the instruction budget by two thirds. And this instruction budget must be bought with dollars that are worth fifty cents of the old-time dollar; in other words, we need twice the number of dollars because of inflation.

Education must also be provided for many more children at the high school level, for people in the United States are using the schools more and more. While soldiers of World War I averaged only 7.6 years of schooling, fifty-nine out of one hundred children now graduate from high school. Furthermore, high school education is more expensive than elementry education.

Who will vote to increase taxes?

Add all these things up, and you see why the school board in your town, if yours is an average community, has had to keep

coming back to the people for more money for the public schools.

More tax money is needed for more schools. More tax money is needed for hospitals and health services. More tax money is needed for old age pensions. Wars past, present, and future claim more dollars than all these put together. Who will vote more taxes for the benefit of children in public schools?

An economist friend of mine says that the reason we have public schools in this country is that big business finds them the cheapest means to trained labor. Big business has to pay taxes, and I am glad it gets its money's worth. But, on a purely human level, the owner of great wealth finds it easier to make a donation to a group trying to keep taxes down than to lead the parade for heavier taxation. In many elections to vote taxes for public schools, the opposition comes from holders of large tracts of real estate and others whose tax rate is high. A friend with a civic conscience says that if we give the ballot to every citizen, we must educate every person who casts a ballot. This is a good reason for education. A patriot friend says that good soldiers are needed for the national defense.

Persons with a national point of view are rarely found in the state legislatures and the school boards of the local districts where most of the decisions concerning school budgets are made. Parents usually care for the welfare of their own children. But with today's longer life span, the number of parents in many communities is matched by the number of aging adults who may lack this concern.

Who then will care for children enough to tax themselves and to persuade their neighbors to do likewise? Where can such people be found, if not in the churches?

How shall churches support the schools?

When our churches and our people decide to send their children to the public schools, we realize that everything that happens in any public school is of concern to us. Churches need to find a way to express this concern. Whose job is it in the local church to care about public schools? Is it the minister's? Is it work for the church school superintendent? Is it the job of the committee on education or of the committee on social action or of the official board?

We must define the role of the church and clear the channels for expressing its concern. Should a church as a church cam-

paign for a school bond election? Should a church as a church participate in a hearing on a tax levy? Is it the church's role to inform its people, and then trust the matter to their consciences? How can we do what is necessary in support of public schools without throwing the community into a sectarian squabble? How can the community be assured of the disinterested concern of the church for children and not think of it as seeking power over an institution of the state?

How shall the church work toward its goal that trustees be elected who are committed to public schools and are qualified to do the job? Will the church make its effort single-handedly? Will it cooperate with other churches? Or will it go into the wider community to participate in the nomination and election of trustees?

Nearly half the money spent for public schools in the United States is appropriated by state legislatures. When a bill for appropriations for school funds comes before the legislature, is the local church concerned? If so, how does it fulfill its responsibility?

Religion in the public schools

Public schools have been charged with being "godless," particularly in communities where funds are being sought for the erection of other kinds of schools. Some persons say that our government is "godless," because it does not build churches nor pay preachers. But we who hear the critics think they are saying that the schools are "anti-God." What do we want the public schools to be and do in matters religious?

When Congregationalists, Methodists, Baptists, Disciples, and Episcopalians decided to send their children to a common school, compromises were made in matters of religious practice and teaching. Nothing sectarian would be taught. This left large areas of common ground for which the public schools accepted responsibility. The homogeneous community of an earlier day is going, and in many places is gone. Today the school population includes Roman Catholics, Jews and non-Christians, as well as Protestants. Are the compromises which were valid in the earlier, simpler community acceptable today?

Is it right for the public schools to have services of worship and to observe the Christian festivals? Some states require that

the Bible shall be read in every classroom, while other states forbid the use of the Bible in any way in the classroom. The law in one state requires that the Ten Commandments shall be displayed in every classroom; the superintendent of public instruction in another state defines such a display as sectarian. Is it fair for the public school to be kicked on one side for being "godless" and on the opposite for being too religious? The American people must define the role which they wish the public schools to play today.

Help define the roles of church and state

Our founding fathers thought that the civil liberties of an individual were safer when power is distributed among the legislative, judicial, and executive branches of government. Do we wish it concentrated, or do we believe in a balance of power? Similar logic underlies the faith of our fathers that the religious freedom of an individual is safer when powers are divided between state and church, keeping the institutions separate. We could avoid the necessity of discussing the appropriate role of each by giving monopoly of power either to the church or to the state. We do not like what we see in totalitarian government; we do not like what history tells of a totalitarian church which used political power to enforce religious belief. Therefore, if we wish to maintain a balance of power, we must be prepared to engage in discussions which will define the role of each institution for our day. These are some of the questions we must help to answer:

Once children had all their meals at home or brought their lunches to eat on the playground. Today they eat in the school lunchroom. Is the child who has the habit of saying grace at meals to be given opportunity to do so in the public school?

Suppose that a school district opens a public school camp. Many things can be taught more effectively in camp than inside the four walls of a classroom. In this situation the child is under the care of the school for five days, twenty-four hours a day. Does the child, who at home prays at bedtime, have the chance to say his prayers in the camp?

The first amendment which prohibits the establishment of religion by government is equally explicit in saying that government is not to prohibit the free exercise of religion. Under this injunction to the public school, would a child of Moslem faith

who wished to lay his prayer rug and face toward Mecca to say his prayers five times a day find that opportunity in a metropolitan high school? While this situation rarely occurs, it will help to focus the problem of making real the freedom of religion.

Responsibility for religious instruction

Home and church must redouble their efforts to provide the distinctively religious education which cannot be given in the common school. Church schools must be strengthened and programs of religious education in the home must be supported by the church. We must explore the contribution of vacation Bible schools, church camps, weekday religious education and "released" or "shared" time.

The legality of released time for religious instruction by churches has now been fully sustained by the United States Supreme Court (the Zorach Case) provided that the machinery of the public schools is not used to support such teaching. Decisions as to the most effective use of programs of shared time are still ahead of us. Good church schools and other programs of Christian training require money. The witness of the church is not clear until we are willing to match our words with money.

Let us look to the public school to see how much religious training should cost. If we say that one hour a day for religious study is the appropriate amount, that will cost approximately one-fifth the expense of a child's education in the public school. Does your church sponsor a program of Christian training supported by that kind of money? Money talks. Your child will respect religious education only if the churches show that they think that religious education is important.

Salaries of teachers

Many communities are discussing the salaries of teachers in the public schools. The salary will be about right and the working conditions will be satisfactory when they lead parents to recommend to their children the career of public school teaching. We who care about children in the public schools must see that the teachers are the kind of persons we wish to have live with our children in the classroom.

Who more than a Christian has reason to concern himself with the welfare of a child? The public schools are a political expression of religious belief, serving all the children of all the people.

religion and public education

The social action agencies of the Evangelical and Reformed Church and the Congregational Christian Churches held a conference on Religion and Public Education at Mansfield, Ohio, in February, 1957. The address by Dr. F. Ernest Johnson stated so clearly the convictions of the members of the conference that they requested that an abstract of it be printed in SOCIAL ACTION. We are delighted to have these concise, logical, informative paragraphs from Dr. Johnson. A former editor of this magazine, he continued to serve as Consultant to the Department of Church and Economic Life of the National Council of Churches.—Editor

There is no one solution for the problem of the relation of religion to public education, applicable throughout the United States. The effort to formulate a uniform rule has led us to be too doctrinaire. A re-examination of the issue is therefore in order.

A pluralist culture

The basic fact is that ours is a pluralist culture and consequently is characterized by a widespread secularization of life. The plurality of faiths and cultural backgrounds makes it impossible that one set of beliefs and sanctions should be dominant or normative. The result is a tendency to make religion a *private* matter, not relevant to public affairs. Hence a dualism arises between the sacred and the secular, which I take to be the essence of secularism as a contemporary phenomenon.

Religious liberty

The basic principle involved is religious liberty, which we all agree is of fundamental importance. Guarantees of religious liberty are essential in a secular state in order to guard against (1) unwarranted interference by the state in religious matters, and

(2) undue pressures upon the state by religious bodies or agencies.

Separation of church and state

The basic policy is the separation of church and state. I call this a policy—as distinguished from a principle—because it is a *means of implementing* the principle of religious liberty. In a religiously homogeneous society the idea of separation between church and state would have no relevance. In our kind of society it is of basic importance.

Yet the separation of church and state has never been absolute, and recent judicial attempts to define it have been abortive. The *Everson-McCollum* doctrine forbidding legislation that would “aid one religion” or “aid all religions,” if strictly applied, would invalidate the National School Lunch Act; ban the chaplaincy maintained at public expense in the armed forces; and, of course, outlaw transportation at public expense of children to and from parochial schools—which the *Everson* decision itself explicitly upheld. The courts have failed to mark the distinction between direct and intentional “aid” and the incidental benefit accruing to religious bodies and agencies through the operation of broadly conceived social policies. This failure, I think, accounts for the grievous lack of consistency between the *Everson-McCollum* doctrine and the liberal construction of the First Amendment enunciated by the Supreme Court in the subsequent *Zorach* (released-time) case.

The upshot of the matter, judicially speaking, seems to be that attempts at sharp definition of boundaries between church and state are in abeyance, but that there is substantial judicial consensus that nothing in the nature of religious *instruction* is allowable in tax-supported schools. Even the liberal *Zorach* decision makes this explicit.

The result is a continuing dilemma for both education and religion: no really unitary program of education on a community-wide basis is possible under public auspices, since in a secular society corporate freedom of religious initiative and expression is curtailed in the interest of the religious liberty of minorities.

Public or parochial schools?

The most *logical* resolution of this dilemma is effected by the religious day school. Here, in theory at least, it is possible to

integrate faith and learning, to make the religious heritage of a child an explicit part of his education. The religious day school—parochial or other—is provided for constitutionally and statutorily in this country and any policy hostile to it is hard to justify.

But, it seems sufficiently clear that the religious school affords no solution for the problems of general education in the United States. The loss of the common, public school would entail a fragmentizing of general education, a down-grading in adequacy and excellence, and the elimination of a major common resource for the support and development of the democratic way of life.

Conclusions

Therefore, those who are deeply concerned over the inadequacy of public education from a religious standpoint seem to be thrown back on something like the following:

In instruction: the need for objective study of religion as an empirical fact, as an intrinsic aspect of the culture.

In values: the need for more intensive and sustained cultivation of awareness and sensitiveness with respect to moral and spiritual values which have broad sanction in the several faiths represented in a single community.

In religious observance: the need for incorporation in the school program of such symbols of the community's faith as are supported by strong local sanction—e.g., the singing of the fourth stanza of "America." The point here is that while an effective sanction seems to exist against dogmatic religious instruction in the schools, exclusion of all religious symbols and of all expression of religious attitudes is unrealistic and inconsistent with democratic community control of public education. The goal here would seem to be a maximum of corporate freedom for religious initiative and expression with a minimum of pressure on individuals and minority groups.

Need for further study

Study of this educational problem at the local community level is urgently needed. The aim would be to find a working consensus that will:

Support serious, reverent study of religion without pressure to believe or conform;

Encourage commitment to commonly held moral and spiritual values;

Support some meaningful corporate ritual that will express the central faith of the community in sincere but non-coercive fashion.

A pressing over-all need is for carefully planned, adequately financed, protracted study of methods and procedures in representative communities directed to the realization of the ends enumerated above.

Dwight Jacques Bradley

1889-1957

Dwight J. Bradley, born at Yankton, S. D., and resident in Cleveland, Ohio, during his youth, was a son of the parsonage, a graduate of Western Reserve University and Oberlin Theological Seminary, pastor of Congregational Christian Churches in California, Ohio, Texas, Missouri, Massachusetts, and New York, professor at Andover Newton Theological Seminary, and director of the Council for Social Action from 1938 to 1943.

He was the author of many books, including *Creative Worship*, *Our Times—What Has the Bible to Say?*, and *Freedom of the Soul*. He was director of the Religious Associates of the National Citizens Political Action Committee, 1944-46. At his death, Dr. Bradley was minister of the Edgehill Community Church (Congregational) in New York and an editorial consultant to *Advance*.

A prayer poem he contributed to the *Christian Century* illustrates his "freedom of soul" and "creative worship."

Give us, O God, to dream until our dream
Becomes at last Thy great Reality.
Give us to hear Thy music, till its theme
Comes to our ears a finished symphony;
Into our shallow pool Thy infinite ocean pour
Until Thy Boundlessness has swallowed our shore.

how shall we pay for public school education?

When SOCIAL ACTION asked this question of Mr. William H. McLin, a Congregationalist and Assistant Director of the Division of Legislation and Federal Relations of the National Education Association, he consulted several of his colleagues on the staff of the NEA. We are deeply grateful to Mr. McLin and his associates for this thoughtful statement concerning the financing of public school education.

For a long time thoughtful people have foreseen the threat of a breakdown of public education in America. It is indicated by mounting birthrates, increasing enrollments, and declining yields from outmoded and inadequate sources of revenue, and the preservation of outgrown administrative units. Few have heeded the "voices crying in the wilderness." Now the Soviet Union's dramatic breakthrough into outer space has underscored the urgency of the problem.

The surging birthrate

There is no doubt that the sudden upsurge in the nation's birthrate caught the experts by surprise. In the 1930s the country was told that the decline in the number of births would continue until America took on the characteristics of an "old" nation. In the face of this prediction, the expansion or replacement of school buildings seemed unwise, and young people came to look upon the profession of teaching as one of limited promise. Citizens began to consider plans for providing security for the aged and became preoccupied with how so few young people could support so many oldsters. The declining yield from the property tax, the traditional basis for school support, caused no alarm since it was possible to balance accounts by the desperate device of trimming the pattern to fit the cloth. The increased mobility of the population, accelerated by the economic stringencies of the times, was viewed as a social maladjustment that must be stamped out. Looking backward, it is hard to recall

how painfully and haltingly America entered into the present phase of her destiny.

It is becoming clear that existing school facilities are inadequate to carry their present burdens. In case the reader resides in a community that has succeeded in providing adequate classroom facilities for grades one through six, let him ponder the fact that live births in this country reached an all-time high in 1956. The primary schools completed yesterday and now filled to capacity will be overwhelmed by the numbers of pupils seeking to enter the first grade in 1961 and 1962. Let no one imagine that this matter can be dealt with in a series of orderly progressions from junior high schools to senior high schools to institutions of higher learning. The rate of birth continues to rise and the great American public will not settle in one community long enough to make feasible such a tidy program. Furthermore, the tax base for the support of the public schools is not being expanded at a rate commensurate with the demands made upon it. Indeed, the traditional base is incapable of sufficient expansion to meet the new needs. The whole financial structure upon which public education rests must be thoroughly examined and completely overhauled, with no delay.

Families on the move

The high school senior who has attended schools in one community for the full twelve years of his or her school career is coming to be the exception. Many students move three or four times within a single school year, often repeating the process in successive years. School systems, with a high level of academic accomplishment find it difficult to avoid the weakening of standards that results from the enrollment of large numbers of pupils with less adequate scholastic backgrounds. Conversely, many communities which failed to see the need for more comprehensive school facilities are being jolted awake by pupils from other school systems with more advantages. Let there be no mistake about it—the matter of providing proper schools for young America has long since outstripped the narrow boundaries set up in the days of the old “destrict” school.

Responsibility of the states

Americans have long regarded public education as primarily a function of the sovereign states of the federal union. As new

lands were opened for settlement it became necessary for the territorial, and later the new state governments, to take a much more active part in the operation of the public schools. Gradually it became evident that there was considerable disparity between the old and the new states in the financial support of education, and a movement began to equalize this difference. By 1930 slightly more than 16 per cent of the monies available for school support came from state revenues. As the economic dislocations of the next decade and the growing mobility of the population tended to focus attention upon inequality of educational opportunity among the several sections of a state, the movement to broaden the base for school support gained impetus. At the present time about 40 per cent of current school funds comes from state sources, on a nationwide basis.

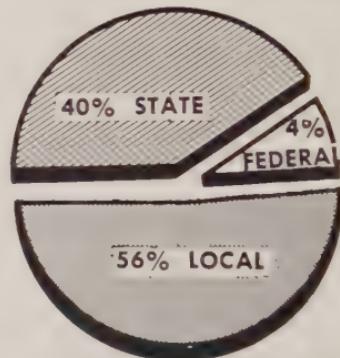
Equalization of opportunity

The argument used to increase the state's support of local schools was that, since the state exercised so much control and supervision of local schools, it was fair to expect it to supply a greater proportion of the operating funds. Take careful note of this sequence, for when the question was raised of broadening the base of school support to include federal funds this point became the basis for the claim that "support brings control." This position reversed the order in which the functions of supervision and financial support were undertaken by the states. This argument will not hold as a basis for the assertion that federal support will bring federal control, as in the case of state support of the schools. Although the national average of school costs borne by the state is 40 per cent, the range is from five to 86 per cent.

The principle of equalization of opportunity inherent in state aid has been recognized at the local level since the nation's earliest days. The richer areas of a community have had no objection to providing for those not so fortunate economically because bitter experience has taught that social and economic barriers are not sufficient to contain fire and disease. Realizing the stronger position of the state because of its greater taxing powers, the next logical step was equalization by state funds. Finally, the greater power of the Federal Government to tap sources of tax revenue and to equalize opportunity over a much wider area has led to its acceptance as a partner in many governmental

functions in the local community. Military defense, highway construction, public health, public welfare, law enforcement—all are now recognized as lying within the realm of national responsibility to a greater or lesser degree.

While the states supply 40 per cent of all school revenues, 56 per cent comes from local sources and 4 per cent from the Federal Government. In general, and in contrast to other school monies, most of the federal funds for school purposes are limited to a few fields of education such as vocational training. Part of the reason for this situation is the too-ready acceptance of the argument that the so-called rich states won't get back as much money as they pay into the federal treasury. Hence, they would be called upon to carry a disproportionate share of the obligations of other states that levy insufficient taxes for their own needs.



SOURCE OF PUBLIC SCHOOL FUNDS

Equalization of the type of taxation

It is true that many commonwealths do levy heavy taxes to provide for the expenses of their schools. The type of taxation, however, can be examined with extremely illuminating results. It will be found that school funds in more than one state are replenished by "severance" taxes upon such raw materials as petroleum. This type of tax is paid by the ultimate consumer of the finished product who may reside at a great distance from its point of origin. Another type of such taxation, that levied upon the transfer of securities, represents property or production outside the jurisdiction of the state. The list could be extended, but it is sufficient to indicate that objectors to federal equalization of educational opportunity often are less than realistic. Furthermore, similar tax practices may throw an added load upon the citizens of a state less able to bear it. Many of the opponents to the use of Federal funds for the equalization of educational opportunity are able to escape a significant amount of taxation at state and local levels, but not at the federal level,

Does federal support mean federal control?

Fear of the federal control of education if federal funds are made widely available disregards the fact that no federal control can be exercised unless the Congress provides for it by specific legislation. In the field of vocational education, for example, where the Federal Government has been a participant since World War I, a few over-zealous federal officials have attempted to interfere with the administration of such education; but they have been promptly repudiated when their actions were called to the attention of their superiors. Investigation of many complaints concerning "federal bureaucratic meddling" in education has shown that a state bureaucracy was doing the meddling and making the Federal Government a convenient whipping boy.

Local responsibility

Those who advocate wider participation by the Federal Government in the support of public education want federal funds to supplement rather than to supplant local funds. They realize that there is danger in making the support of education so remote from the citizen that he no longer feels responsible for it. Neither should he be left to struggle hopelessly with an ever-increasing burden. A satisfactory combination of continuing local control and local support coupled with additional federal funds has been evolved in the "federally impacted areas" near federal installations, where sudden additions to the local school population have threatened to swamp the existing schools. After complying with a few simple but necessary accounting procedures, the local school authorities receive a transfer of funds from the federal treasury which they are free to spend on any aspect of the school program. No federal agents check the course of study, methods of teaching, or other phases of school operation.

Is aid constitutional?

No objector to federal participation in the support of public education has backed up his challenge of unconstitutionality by a test case in the courts. Ample opportunity has been afforded for such a case. Since 1785, Congress has passed over 160 laws dealing with federal aid. Indeed, the principle of federal aid to education antedates the Constitution itself as reference to the Northwest Ordinance will prove. It is difficult to understand

how the erroneous idea arose that federal aid to education is unconstitutional. Ample justification for it exists in Article I, Section 8, of the Constitution:

The Congress shall have Power.—1. To lay and collect Taxes, Duties, Imposts and Excises, to pay the Debts and provide for the common Defense and general Welfare of the United States; but all Duties, Imposts, and Excises shall be uniform throughout the United States.

The question remains whether to classify aid to education as contributing to the "common Defence" or to the "general Welfare" or whether it serves as an underpinning for both.

Church-connected schools

Although this discussion is primarily concerned with public schools, the question of church-connected and other schools operated under private auspices must receive at least passing mention. Denied access to tax revenues, these institutions nevertheless enroll a growing number of students. If these young people were forced to turn to the public schools for instruction the effect on overloaded tax structures would be catastrophic. On the other hand, the validity of the argument that these pupils do not benefit from increased taxes for public education must be carefully weighed. This whole issue will have to be examined in an objective manner, for it is one strewn with pitfalls.

Search for valid answers

There is no easy solution to the complex problem of providing adequate support of free public education for all Americans. In recent years many of the nation's most cherished concepts have had to change their outward form without altering their inward substance. The current suggestion that the Federal Government return to smaller units such as the states the responsibility for vocational education, for instance, is a futile attempt to swim against the tide in the opinion of many. "Freedom of choice" is an empty phrase to those who lack the resources to carry their choices into action. A static philosophy is scarcely equal to the demands of this dynamic age. Education is falling behind in the competition to obtain a share of public funds. The God-fearing people of this age, however denominated as to creed, nationality, or race, must unite in their efforts to find adequate means to cope with this vexatious question.

By C. Willard Cross, Superintendent
of Schools, Faribault, Minnesota.



married women in the teaching profession

All schools, public and non-public, from the nursery school through the graduate school, are being challenged to do a better job. This is as it should be, for the complicated life which we live today requires more and better education. But the problem of doing a better job is primarily the problem of getting more and better teachers.

How old should a teacher be?

Some years ago, as a superintendent of schools, I received an application from a woman who was approaching the usually accepted retirement age. Assuming that her age would be against her she reminded me that Mr. Eisenhower was older than she when he became president of the United States, that Pope Pius was older than she when he became head of the Roman Catholic Church, and that Michelangelo did some of his greatest work when he was considered an old man.

A Columbia University professor recently said that a teacher should be "old enough to know how to teach and young enough to have the energy to do it." What is the range of ages between which teachers have these qualifications? Rather than try to answer that specific question, I am going to make some observations about the fact that we are getting a more mature group of teachers in our schools.

The average age of school teachers is higher than it was

twenty years ago. More men are continuing in the profession until retirement instead of teaching for a few years and then finding other work. But the principal reason for the increased average is the large number of married women who are teaching. Some marry while they are teaching and continue to teach. Others withdraw for a period and return to the profession.

In the rural schools of Rice County, Minnesota, all the teachers are married. In nine Minnesota communities with populations from ten thousand to thirty thousand, the percentage of women teachers who are married varies from seventeen per cent to forty-five per cent, with an average of thirty-four per cent. Superintendents of all these schools indicated that the percentage is increasing and will probably continue to do so. This is typical of the situation throughout Minnesota and throughout the country.

Contributions of mature, married teachers

Is the movement toward an increasing maturity of teachers, primarily through the larger number of married teachers, a good thing? Let's seek answers to these questions:

First, will it make for a better profession of teaching? It would seem so. No other profession gives a long period of training and expects the recipient of that training to drop it after a few years of practice. If married women are to be employed, longer periods of training will be justified and there will be more permanency in the profession. There will be young beginning teachers and older experienced teachers just as there are young doctors and old doctors, but the average age will be older. Already women are willing to spend longer periods in training and to return for refresher courses when they resume teaching. Professional standards of training and the demands for effective teaching must be kept as high as possible, even during this period when there is a shortage of teachers.

Second, will this movement help the schools? There is no question that it has helped to meet the shortage of teachers. This is very questionable help, however, unless the quality of teachers is maintained. The majority opinion seems to be that, if intelligently carried on, the employment of married teachers will provide not only quantity but quality. Well chosen married women bring to the profession mature, balanced judgment, well

adjusted personalities, understanding of children from a parent's point of view, understanding of the citizen's point of view regarding school costs, and usually a rather strong desire to teach, or they would seek other employment.

In order to be able to meet the demands of time and energy required by school teaching, women who are both teachers and homemakers must organize their time and energy and make adequate provision for help in the home. School teaching cannot be added to a full-time job. Teaching today requires keeping up to date both in subject matter and in improved methods of teaching. This requires opportunity to attend conferences and summer school sessions and to do personal reading and study.

Third, how does it affect the home? What is the result of taking women out of the home, of having two income-earners in the family, of having women, especially mothers, with two jobs? This is a much debated question and refers to all women workers. A limited amount of experience indicates that as far as married school teachers are concerned, they can do it. Problem children seldom come from families where the mother is teaching. The homes of married teachers are not disintegrating. Often the improved economic situation has offset any disadvantages.

Remove arbitrary barriers

The increased maturity of teachers resulting primarily from an increased number of married teachers is a beneficial movement. It should be encouraged. Schools will, however, have to remove the arbitrary barriers against married teachers and older teachers. Some schools have age limits for the employment of new teachers. Some will not hire local teachers. Some will not hire married teachers. Many will not hire wives whose husbands work in the school system. The criteria should be: Is the person qualified by training and experience to be a good teacher and is she so situated that adequate time and energy can be given to teaching and to professional improvement?

Schools should also seek ways of using mothers, on a part-time basis. In some communities they are used as kindergarten teachers for a half-day or in high school for a few periods. Some schools have a plan for "helpers" with limited responsibility. Schools are apt to be bound by the tradition of a full-time teacher. More thought and imagination are needed to enable the schools to utilize the contribution of married women teachers.

By Richard M. Fagley, Executive Secretary, Commission of the Churches on International Affairs, a joint commission of the World Council of Churches and the International Missionary Council.

evaluation:

twelfth session of the general assembly of the united nations

These paragraphs are taken from Dr. Fagley's introduction to the CCIA's Memorandum on Selected Actions of the Twelfth Session of the General Assembly of the United Nations. The CCSA¹ has a limited supply of the Memorandum, single copies of which are available upon request, as long as they last.

The Twelfth Session of the United Nations General Assembly was essentially conservative in character. It lacked the tragic and critical drama of the long Eleventh Session when military intervention in Hungary and the Middle East led to a time of severe testing. It took no giant steps into the future. But it consolidated some of the gains of the past, and moved a number of issues forward.

In one sense, it was a disappointing Assembly. The hopes expressed at the outset that this might prove to be the "Assembly of Disarmament" were frustrated by the continued Soviet-Western deadlock and distrust, and perhaps by the need for time to assess the new factors symbolized by the Soviet earth satellites. With two or three notable exceptions, imaginative new approaches to world problems were noticeable by their absence. Yet, some seeds with promise for the future were planted, and the general trend was one of slow but continued growth. This is significant, because "if it is to live, the United Nations must grow."

¹ Attention: Rev. Herman F. Reissig, CCSA, 289 Fourth Avenue, New York 10, N. Y.

Disarmament

The six-power proposals of the London Disarmament Conference were tested in the heat of Assembly debate and won new converts, if not Soviet acceptance. The addition of fourteen members to the Disarmament Commission, in an effort to find middle ground with those who wanted more inclusive discussions, had some advantages as well as the obvious disadvantages. While the gap between the principal parties widened during the Assembly, time and the pressure of world opinion may narrow it in the months ahead. It should be added, however, that the technical problems of disarmament can only grow with delay.

Assessment for the UN emergency force

Of potential significance for the future was the decision to assess the member nations, in accordance with the scale of assessment for the regular UN budget, to pay next year's expenses of the UN Emergency Force in the Near East. This action puts the truce supervision machinery on a much more solid foundation than dependence on voluntary contributions. It reflects the wide recognition of the service being rendered by the UNEF. It connotes a greater willingness to undertake measures of this type in areas of tension or conflict. It suggests a more responsible attitude toward the financial implications of UN resolutions.

Technical assistance

The Twelfth Session may be remembered for its action in the field of technical assistance "in depth," that is, the undertaking of more thoroughgoing technical assistance projects than has been possible under the current widely diffused program. After years of deadlock between the more developed and the less developed countries over a joint fund for financial assistance (SUNFED), a compromise agreement was reached on an expanded effort in technical development to help pave the way for capital investment. The projected fund, designed to treble the current program, is being called SPUR (Special Projects for Underdeveloped Regions) to symbolize the galvanic character of the undertaking envisaged. The goal now to be pursued—a total amounting to \$100 million per year—is very modest in comparison with the needs of the less developed countries, but it is a big step forward measured by UN performance in recent years.

Refugees

In renewing the mandate for the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees, the Assembly gave a realistic and helpful interpretation of the refugee problem as a continuing phenomenon in a world of tensions, and of the flexibility needed for the fulfillment of the purposes of the High Commissioner's function. On the other hand, the inadequate response of members to the undiminished needs of Palestinian refugees in the Near East underscored the critical character of that tragic situation.

Human rights

The Assembly continued to mark time in its protracted debate on the texts of the draft Covenants of Human Rights. Some of the resolutions in the field of dependent peoples may acquire significance in the course of events, and evaluation now would be premature. Conflicting claims over West Irian (West New Guinea) led to a serious deterioration of Indonesian-Dutch relations, but factors outside the UN, rather than the divided opinion within the UN, seem primarily responsible.

Tensions

Tensions between Syria and Turkey and the powers behind them had their influence on Assembly discussions. But the crisis which was portrayed as urgent subsided just as quickly, and did not require the emergency actions taken in last year's Near Eastern crisis.

Debates

While the UN debates were often acrimonious, and may be defended as a kind of "safety valve" or criticized as inflammatory, there were growing or continued signs of moderation when it came to action. The view that ill-advised UN resolutions can make a bad situation worse has gained headway. Also, there is greater recognition of the need for harmonizing divergent policies, if the organization is to survive and serve. The delicate balances between "East" and "West," "colonial" and "anti-colonial" blocs, provide a precarious but important groundwork for this venture in international cooperation. The increasing awareness of their claims may be regarded as a measure of responsibility in UN affairs.



"WE CALL TO MIND"

A DocuDrama by Philip C. Lewis

When the school budget for Tenafly, New Jersey, was defeated largely because of an item of \$52,000 for an increase in teachers' salaries, community leaders turned to Philip C. Lewis, a playwright, documentary film writer, and public relations consultant. Mr. Lewis realized that facts concerning our school system and its need for more financial support were available, but that they had little meaning for the average citizen. Mr. Lewis wrote *We Call to Mind*, a DocuDrama, which was presented in each of the Tenafly public schools. According to Donald J. Winfield, president of the Tenafly Board of Education,

This was one of the most significant projects undertaken to tell the people about today's problems in public school education. We remember no other occasion when a stimulating message about our schools has been presented to so many so effectively.

A narrator and four actors play the parts of forty-nine characters, in a manner reminiscent of George Bernard Shaw's *Don Juan in Hell*. Lively episodes depict the resistance of some of our forefathers to education and the sacrifices others made for it:

Children should pass their days in the cotton patch, or at the plow, or in the cornfield, instead of being mewed up in a schoolhouse. I hope you do not conceive it at all necessary that everybody should be able to read, write, and cipher.—From a letter to a South Carolina newspaper in 1829.

God knows I's ignorant an' poor, but I knows what you is trying to do. I knows you is trying to make better men an' women for the colored race. I ain't got no money, but I want you to take dese six eggs what I's been saving up, an' I wants you to put dese six eggs into eddication of dese boys an' gals.—From a former slave to Booker T. Washington.

The DocuDrama then turns to the qualifications, problems, professional competence, and salaries of teachers. Parents and teachers advise against entering the teaching profession:

I know you'd like to be a teacher, son, but there's no money in it. If you knew how I'd worked to keep you in shoes and get you through school—how do you think you'd do it for your kids?

I wish I could encourage you, John—as a teacher in a teachers' college, maybe I'm supposed to. . . . You know, I have a cousin who never got through high school. He's making more than I am on a bulldozer.

After describing the persons in all walks of life who oppose higher taxes for better education, the DocuDrama ends with these words from the Narrator:

May we suggest as you go home tonight that you take a new look at America. Nothing can do more to confirm your faith in education. Because everything you see—our products, our techniques, our health, our democratic ideals—all were created and are sustained by the minds of our people—minds awakened, inspired and trained in our schools.

Presentation of *We Call to Mind* takes about an hour. The

five actors need not memorize their parts, but can read them from the script. The only equipment needed is four chairs, two lecterns, a stool, and some spot-lights.

We call to Mind is copyrighted and subject to royalty. Copies may be obtained at 75c each from DocuDrama, Box 151, Tenafly, N. J. A tape for the guidance of actors may be secured for a deposit of \$15, \$10 of which will be refunded if the tape is returned in ten days. Church groups can make a significant contribution to education by presenting *We Call to Mind*.

—FERN BABCOCK

program planning

THE CHURCH AND THE PUBLIC SCHOOLS

The public schools carry major responsibility for the welfare of the children of all the people. Therefore, the church must be concerned about their purposes, achievements and problems. Some of the ways the church might go about fulfilling its responsibilities for the public schools are:

Gather a group of interested persons, who might be members of the social action committee, the Christian education committee, the family life committee, representatives of these bodies

or an informal group of interested church members.

Meeting One: Christians' Concern for the Public Schools. Four members of the group might be asked to give brief reviews of the articles on pages 4 to 24 of this magazine. A fifth member might describe the experience of the Central Congregational Church in Providence, R. I., as outlined in "Honest Talk in Churches" by Lawrence L. Durgin in *SOCIAL ACTION* for March, 1957. The chairman might lead a discussion concerning the

relevance of these articles for the school situation in your community.

Meeting Two: a Report on Our Schools. Ask a school principal, a teacher, a member of the school board and a member of the Parent-Teacher Association to participate in a panel discussion of questions such as these: Does our community have enough classrooms for today's pupils? Will it have enough for the children who will enter the first grade in 1962? Does it have enough well qualified teachers? How do salaries for teachers compare with those for other professional workers with similar training? With other civil servants such as policemen, mail carriers, and street cleaners? What proportion of the children of the community attend public schools? Parochial schools? Other private schools? How can churches assist the public schools in their task? (Or ask members of the group to interview these school officials and give reports of their replies.)

Meeting Three: Week-day Religious Instruction. Invite the teachers of these classes to describe their work and to suggest ways in which a more effective program of instruction might be developed. Mr. Hunt, on page 10, suggests that children should have an hour of religious instruction a day. Does your community provide this amount? Is the quality of religious instruction comparable to that of the

public schools? If not, why not? It might be interesting to compare the amount of money the community pays for each hour of general education with that spent by the churches for religious instruction.

Meeting Four: Plans for Action. Ask one member of the group to review the suggestions that have been made at previous meetings for improving the public schools in your community. Select the issues upon which you will act and assign responsibility for taking the next steps.

Ask another member to write to Congressmen and state legislators inquiring about proposed federal and state legislation. An excellent source of information concerning the proposals that will be debated in Congress this spring is the January 1, 1958, issue of *Memo*, the semi-monthly publication of the Washington Office of the National Council of Churches, 122 Maryland Avenue, N.E., Washington 2, D. C. (subscription: \$1.00 per year). Decide how your church can play its part in helping the local government, the state and the Federal Government to meet the current crisis in public education.

If a program of education is needed in the church and in the community, consider presenting *We Call to Mind*, a DocuDrama by Philip C. Lewis, described on page 27 of this magazine.

—FERN BABCOCK



Scripture

Genesis 1: 26-30

Job 28: 12 ff.

Proverbs 2: 1-15, 3: 1-20

I Corinthians 1: 15 ff.

Philippians 8: 4 and 5

Hymns

Be Thou My Vision

God of Grace and God of Glory

Send Down Thy Truth, O God

Lift Up Your Hearts

Litany

Almighty God, the giver of all that is beautiful and just and true, hear our prayers in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord.

For all who teach our children that they may be encouraged by Thy guidance and enlightened by Thy presence,

We beseech Thee to hear us.

For all who have given themselves to searching the mysteries of Thy universe, to learning the lessons of the past, and to the day's own needs, that they may be strengthened and assured in the knowledge of Thy providence,

We beseech Thee to hear us.

For all who study under them that they may ever love true

knowledge and find in Thee, our God, direction in its use,

We beseech Thee to hear us.

For all school committeemen, for administrators and public officials that they may be supported by grace and given the vision to lead us all,

We beseech Thee to hear us.

Grant us with all Thy mercies the conviction and the strength to carry the burden of responsibility for our schools. Raise up among us youth committed to inquiry and teaching and research. And let Thy church ever deplore ignorance, seeking rather to make possible the education of all Thy children everywhere.

Grant us the strength to do Thy truth.

Almighty God, our heavenly Father, from whom come life and breath, lift up our hearts and minds that we may ever look unto Thee, the light in our darkness and the truth which informs our every human way, for the sake of Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

—REV. CHARLES A. BALDWIN,
Associate Minister, Central Congregational Church,
Providence, R. I.

call to action



Lincoln's and Washington's birthdays, Race Relations Sunday, and Brotherhood Week—as well as the social action emphasis in the Evangelical and Reformed and Congregational Christian Churches—all fall in February. This year the crackling racial tensions in Little Rock and Levittown and many other places cry out for attention from Christians and for action by agencies for Christian social action.

You were there in Little Rock when the Commission and the Council responded to the call for financial assistance and for counsel. You were there in Levittown when the pastors published the denominational positions taken in support of racially unsegregated housing; you were there in Levittown when the Commission and the Council provided secretarial help to pastors working for reconciliation. Indeed, you were there before these sit-

uations became critical because the Commission and the Council long have had positive programs of education and action for racial integration.

You were there when you contributed to the work of your national agencies for Christian social action through your church. You were there in a special way when you gave an additional gift in the February appeal for the work of the CSA. Such individual gifts, beyond the giving of the churches, make possible this positive and redemptive work.

Are you concerned about Little Rocks and Levittowns? You could not be otherwise and bear the name of Christian. Then take this opportunity to be there when your help is needed; be there in advance when preventive work can be done; be there when there are wounds to bind. You can help pour the oil which heals.—RAY GIBBONS

Send your personal gift to your church social action agency at the appropriate one of these addresses:

The Council for Social Action of the Congregational Christian Churches, 289 Fourth Avenue, New York 10, New York.

The Commission on Christian Social Action of the Evangelical and Reformed Church, 2969 West 25th Street, Cleveland 13, Ohio.

coming events



FEBRUARY 11-13 *Southern Christian Social Action Institute, Avon Park, Fla. Dean, Robbins Ralph.*

APRIL 15-17 *Washington Seminar, Washington, D. C. Sponsored by the CCSA. Director, Fern Babcock.*

JUNE 20-22 *Churchmen's Fellowship Conference on the Responsibility of the Churchman as a Citizen, Collegeville, Pa.*

JUNE 30-JULY 12 *Race Relations Institute, Fisk University, Nashville, Tenn.*

JUNE 30-AUGUST 11 *European Seminar. Leaders, Rev. and Mrs. Galen R. Weaver.*

JULY 1-5 *West Coast Christian Social Action Institute, Mill Valley, Calif. Dean, Rev. Huber F. Klemme.*

JULY 8-12 *Midwest Christian Social Action Institute, Lakeland College, Sheboygan, Wis. Dean, Rev. F. Nelsen Schlegel.*

JULY 15-19 *Central States Christian Social Action Institute, Oberlin College, Oberlin, Ohio. Dean, Rev. Ray Gibbons.*

JULY 22-26 *Eastern Christian Social Action Institute, Framingham, Mass. Dean, Rev. Myron W. Fowell.*

AUGUST 8-27 *Mexican Seminar. Leaders, Rev. and Mrs. Huber F. Klemme.*

For more information write the Council for Christian Social Action, 289 Fourth Avenue, New York 10, N. Y., OR 2969 West 25th Street, Cleveland 13, Ohio.

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